

Chapter 6

Open Space

INTRODUCTION

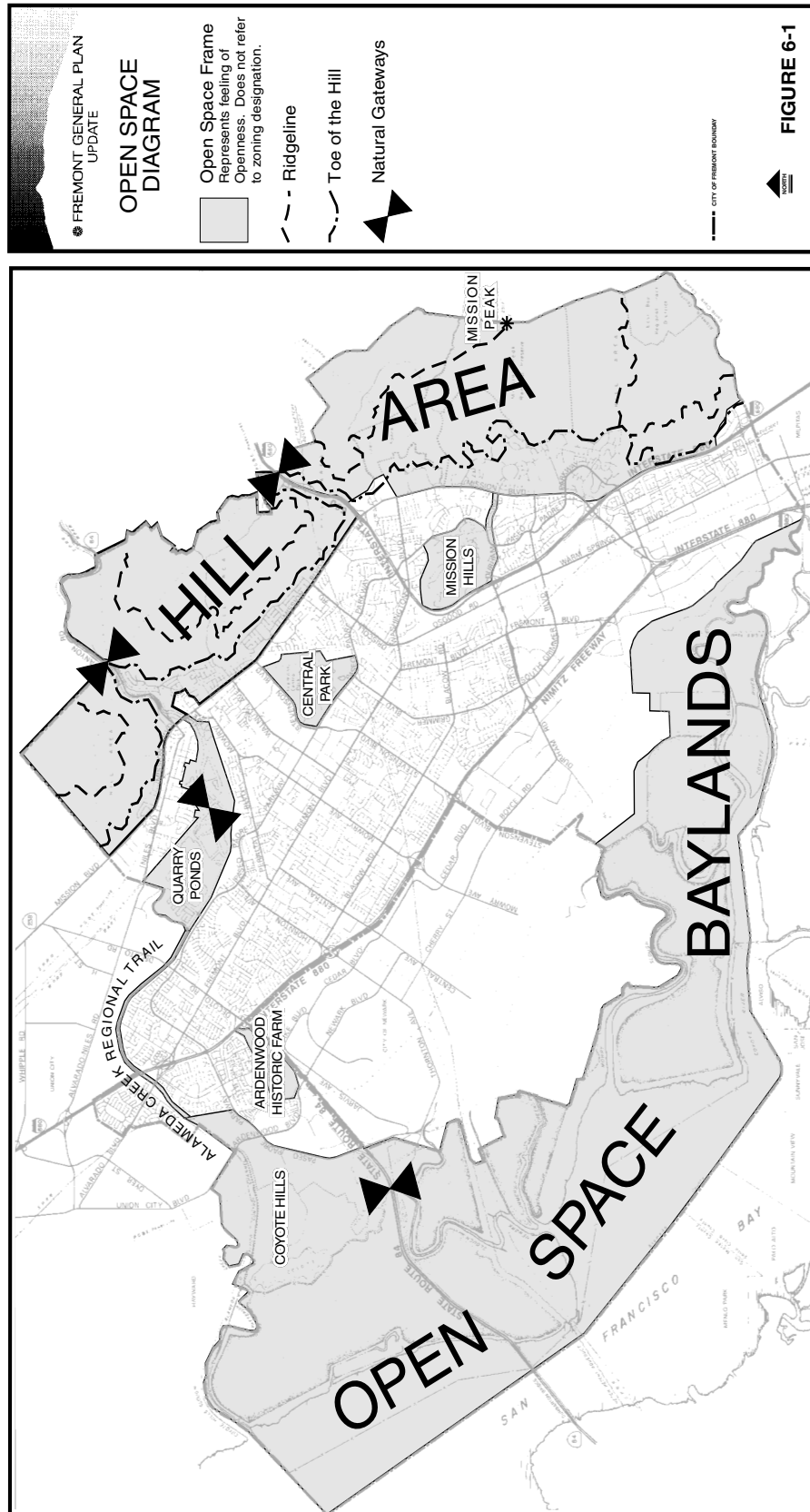
From its inception Fremont has articulated and implemented open space policies that retain the diversity of its natural setting and emphasize the city's unique identity. Fremont's residents are never far from natural areas: the hills and baylands, Central Park, bicycle and hiking trails, regional and local parks. Each of these elements contributes to Fremont's feeling of openness as a community.

Fremont's extensive system of parks also contributes to the open space character of the city. Parks and recreation are discussed in Chapter 11.

This chapter describes Fremont's open spaces and is divided into six sections, each discussing an aspect of open space:

- Hill Planning Area
- Baylands and Wetlands
- Northern Boundary
- Trails
- Civic Open Space
- Gateways

While each element of Fremont's open space system is described in separate sections, each is as one part of a puzzle that, when put together, contributes to Fremont's unique and special identity. Fremont's open space network is illustrated in Figure 6.1



HILL PLANNING AREA

Setting

The Hill Planning Area encompasses several defined areas in Fremont's hills. The area includes eight distinct subareas: Base of the Hills, the Hill Face, Niles Hills, Vargas Plateau West, Vargas Plateau East, Mission Creek, Sheridan Road, and Mission Hills West. These areas are described in the Hill Planning Area section of the Land Use Chapter.

The term Hill Area in figure 6.1 denotes that portion of the Hill Planning Area that was within the City limits on January 1, 2002, except Mission Hills West. This definition of Hill Area applies throughout the setting subsection of this Hill Planning part. The Hill Area of Fremont consists of approximately 13,000 acres lying generally north and east of Mission Boulevard and I-680. The hills rise prominently from Fremont's flatlands, forming a seasonal green and gold backdrop to the city. The ridgeline varies in elevation from about 1,800 feet on the northern end to 2,500 feet at Mission Peak near the southern end.

Public Lands. About 2,800 acres of the Hill Area is in public ownership. Largest of the public holdings is the 2,596 acre Mission Peak Regional Preserve. This Reserve is managed by the East Bay Regional Park District, but parts are owned by the City and by Ohlone Community College District. Several other smaller properties on the hill face, totaling about 100 acres, are owned by the City.

Private Lands. The remaining 10,000+ acres of land in the Hill Area are privately owned.

Functions and Use

Natural Resources

Important natural resources found in the hills include wetlands, habitat for a variety of plant and animal species and mineral resources. These are described in the Natural Resources Chapter. There are no woodlands (or forest lands) for the managed production of resources in Fremont.

Agricultural Use

Much of the hills is productive agricultural land used for grazing (see the Soils section of the Natural Resources Chapter).

Watersheds

Most of the 20 intermittent creeks, which drain the hills, drain into Lake Elizabeth or to the Bay and are not part of Fremont's watershed. However,

some creeks in the northern section of the hills drain into Alameda Creek and become part of the city's water supply (see Natural Resources Chapter, Water Resources section).

Outdoor Recreation

The Mission Peak Regional Preserve is a heavily used recreation area for hiking, bird watching, nature study, hang-gliding and other recreational pursuits.

Protection of Public Safety

Although houses have been built at the base of the hill area there are major constraints to development at higher elevations on the Hill Face. In some portions of the Hill Planning Area there are unstable and highly erodible slopes and potential landslides. There is also poor access increasing the difficulty of providing emergency medical and fire services to this area. Limited access also means constrained egress in the case of fire or other emergency (see the Health and Safety Chapter).

Regulatory Environment

Development in the Hill Area demarcated in figure 6.1 is controlled by citizen initiatives passed in 2002 and 1981. The regulations of those initiatives are incorporated in the General Plan and are found in the appropriate Chapters of this General Plan, particularly in the Land Use Chapter under "Hill Area." That chapter should be reviewed for all regulations and definitions for the Hill Area.

Projections

Public Lands

Through actions by the City, private developers and the East Bay Regional Park District, the amount of land in public ownership is expected to increase.

The Regional Park District has funds from a bond measure passed in 1988, which can be used for:

- acquisition and development of a Vargas Plateau Regional Park in cooperation with the City of Fremont;
- construction of a trail between Garin Regional Park (in Hayward) and Mission Peak Regional Preserve; and
- expansion of the Mission Peak Regional Park and provision for improved public access (trail heads and parking areas).

The City expects to receive further dedication of land on the Hill Face as part of development projects seeking to maximize development potential on relatively accessible and less constrained land. These actions should increase the amount of open space and its accessibility and public recreational use in the Hill Planning Area.

Private Lands

Under the 1981 Hill Initiative, the extension of urban services to areas at higher elevations than currently (1990) served would have increased the land's development potential. Such development would increase the supply of housing but would also have impacts on the city's open space character. Impacts would include loss of productive grazing land, disturbance and loss of wildlife habitats, diminishment of the visual and aesthetic character of the Open Space Frame, and possible impacts on Alameda Creek watershed. Extension of services to the Vargas Plateau West would also increase the development potential of the Hill Face. Finally, extension of services would significantly increase the pressure for development on the 3,500+ privately-owned acres in the hills in an area referred to in the Land Use Chapter as Vargas Plateau East and Sheridan Road subareas.

Accordingly, development in the Hill Area is further limited under the 2002 Initiative.

BAYLANDS AND WETLANDS

Setting

Much of Fremont's open space, and especially the land closest to the Bay, is wetlands. Wetlands include areas that are perennially wet, such as creeks, ponds, and the Bay. Seasonal wetlands are lands which hold water for a portion of the year but where no standing or running water is visible at other times.

The general locations of most wetlands have been roughly mapped by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service using satellite infrared analysis. Actual boundaries are delineated on a case-by-case basis when development proposals require filling wetlands. Wetlands cannot be filled without a permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

There are no coastal beaches or rivers in Fremont. While most of the wetlands are located along Fremont's westerly perimeter, wetlands further inland (generally east of I-880) include freshwater ponds, creeks and lakes

interspersed with existing development. These include Lake Elizabeth, the tule ponds by the BART station and the Alameda Creek quarry ponds. Wetlands are discussed in more detail in the biological resources section of the Natural Resource Chapter.

Public Lands

Approximately 10,000 acres of Fremont's wetlands are within the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge created in 1972. Wildlife protection is the Refuge's highest priority, and public use is a secondary concern. Accordingly, access is highly controlled. A Visitor's Center is located near the Dumbarton Bridge. Other wetlands are within Coyote Hills Regional Park (1,039 acres) which is owned by the regional park district.

The Alameda County Water District and the flood control district own most of the wetlands and contiguous uplands in developed areas of Fremont. With a few exceptions, they are managed for flood control or water recharge, rather than for their recreation and habitat open space functions (see Water Resources section of the Natural Resources Chapter for further discussion).

Privately-Owned Wetlands

Privately-owned wetlands remain along the fringes of the Bay, in a few urbanized areas, and along creeks and scattered ponds in the hills.

Functions

Natural Resources

Fremont's wetlands and contiguous uplands are an invaluable ecological resource, as described in the Natural Resources Chapter. The San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Lake Elizabeth and the associated nature area, and the Alameda Creek quarry ponds are all important resources for ecological and other scientific study purposes. The lake shore area of Lake Elizabeth is also an important resource protected from development in Central Park.

Managed Production of Resources

A portion of Fremont's wetland area is used for commercial salt production (see Mineral Resources section of the Natural Resources Chapter). Some upland areas adjacent to wetlands are in agricultural production (see following section, "Northern Boundary). There is no commercial fishing industry in Fremont.

Outdoor Recreation

Most of Fremont's Bay wetlands are incorporated in the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge or in the Coyote Hills Regional Park. Both of these facilities are used for hiking, picnicking, bird-watching, and other recreational activities. A pier within the Refuge provides access to Bay fishing and there is also small boat access. The regional park has an interpretive center, an Ohlone Indian shellmound, a reconstructed Indian village, and trails.

Protection of Public Safety

Wetland areas are generally underlain by Bay muds and other unstable soils which are highly susceptible to liquefaction, subsidence and other dangers during seismic events (See Health and Safety Chapter).

Regulatory Environment

The City of Fremont and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are the primary regulatory agencies charged with protection of wetlands within the city's boundaries. Several other public agencies are also concerned with wetlands, including the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Permits to fill wetlands must be obtained from the Corps of Engineers which seeks input from other public agencies prior to granting such permits.

Because of the tremendous national loss of wetlands, the Corps operates under a Federal requirement of "no net loss" of wetlands due to filling. Developers may be required to (a) find an alternative site, (b) avoid the wetlands in the development plan, or (c) purchase or expand an off-site wetlands to replace the destroyed wetlands.

Through its environmental review process, the City also determines whether a proposed project will affect wetlands. In its analysis, the City relies on the Corps of Engineers' "unified" methodology for delineating wetlands. The City can require mitigation measures that preserve and augment wetlands as a condition of project approval. For example, Bayside Business Park developed a 250 acre wetland habitat, the largest such private project ever completed on the Bay.

Projections

Under Federal legislation approved in 1989, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been authorized to purchase available remaining Bay wetland parcels for expansion of the Wildlife Refuge. In Fremont, 2,300 acres

(including public lands) have been identified for Federal acquisition. However, funding is expected to be provided in small increments over several years.

The City anticipates several parcels of land with wetlands will be proposed for development in the next ten years. Almost all of these parcels are identified by USFWS for possible purchase.

Due to the resource and open space values of wetlands, the City will seek to identify and protect remaining wetlands, while allowing development to proceed which conserves identified wetlands.

Modifications are planned for the Alameda Creek quarry wetlands area. The Alameda County Water District has proposed improvements to the ponds to increase their ability to recharge the Niles Cone Aquifer (see Water Resources section of the Natural Resources Chapter). At the same time, the park district is proposed to improve the recreational character of the quarry area. The City, East Bay Regional Park District and ACWD plan to develop the Alameda Creek Quarries as a regional recreation resource.

Finally, any extension of BART could have a significant impact on the wetlands south of Walnut Avenue. An extension could also have an impact on Lake Elizabeth.

NORTHERN BOUNDARY

Setting

Four major open space areas compose the northern boundary of Fremont's space frame: Alameda Creek, Alameda Creek quarries, Ardenwood Regional Preserve, and agricultural lands near Coyote Hills. Each is described below.

Alameda Creek

When the Army Corps of Engineers rerouted Alameda Creek into a flood control channel beginning in the 1960's, it created the 12-mile long Alameda Creek Regional Trail managed by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD). The trail extends from the mouth of Niles Canyon, to the Bay and provides a clearly defined northern perimeter for Fremont's open space frame.

Alameda Creek Quarries

This group of water-filled quarry pits covers about 460 acres along Alameda Creek. Although the natural environment of the quarries has

been profoundly altered, some riparian woodland and marsh area remains. Most of the quarries are owned by the water district and EBRPD.

Ardenwood Regional Preserve

Until the 1980's, the area of Fremont north of Route 84 and west of I-880 was part of a large farming operation. When the area was proposed for development the City successfully preserved 200 acres of land in a regional park to serve as a reminder of the area's agricultural past and as part of the open space frame. The working, historic farm is owned by the City and managed by EBRPD.

Private Agricultural Lands

Since the arrival of the Mission fathers in the late 1700's, Fremont's flatlands have been valued for farming. Today, only the 400 acres of intensively cultivated farmland on the Northern Plain remains of the city's privately cultivated farmlands. Of those 400 acres, about 150 acres are in an open space easement which limits the use of the land to agriculture or other open space uses. This agricultural area is rated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as being "prime" agricultural soils.

Functions

Natural Resources

Alameda Creek is a critical element of the city's water supply. The creek banks provide valuable wildlife habitat. Although modified by man, the Alameda Creek Quarries have a variety of wetlands vegetation and associated wildlife, and are a valuable resting area for shore birds and migratory fowl. A portion of the Ardenwood Regional Preserve and private agricultural area is underlain by mineral resources identified by the State as being of regional importance (see Natural Resources Chapter for further discussion of resource functions). Ardenwood Regional Preserve is also an important resource for ecological and other scientific study purposes.

The agricultural uses in the Northern Boundary area are a relatively benign neighbor for the wetlands resources of the regional park and wildlife refuge. The farmland protects the refuge and park from encroachment by less compatible uses. Portions of the agricultural areas are believed to have potential for conversion to wetlands. Such conversion, if successful, would help to reverse in a small way the historic loss of wetlands resources around the Bay. Conversion would only occur if this land was purchased for this purpose by a public agency or by private interests seeking to mitigate wetlands impacts elsewhere in the South Bay.

Managed Production of Resources

The primary purpose of the ponds in the Alameda Creek Quarries is recharge of the groundwater aquifer underlying Fremont. The farmland in the Northern Boundary area produces a wide variety of crops, including cauliflower, lettuce, corn and other vegetables for commercial markets.

Outdoor Recreation

The Alameda Creek Regional Trail borders the Alameda Creek flood control channel and links Coyote Hills Regional Park and the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge with the Alameda Creek quarries. A gravel path on the northern side is used for horses, and a paved path on the south side for bicyclists; both paths are used by pedestrians. A portion of the Alameda Creek Quarry area is within Niles Community Park and is open to fishing.

At the Ardenwood Regional Preserve visitors can personally experience life on a late 19th century farm, helping with planting, harvesting, and other farm work.

Public Health and Safety

The Alameda Creek flood control channel was designed to protect large areas of Fremont from periodic flooding. The open space character of the Alameda Creek Quarries protects the city's water supply from some urban pollutants.

Projections

The City of Fremont, EBRPD, and the Alameda County Water District plan to develop a regional recreation area at the Alameda Creek Quarries. The logistics, design and engineering involved in maintaining the use of the quarries for groundwater recharge while allowing recreational use have complicated the development of this long-planned park. Current estimates are that the park should be developed by 1998.

The only link in Fremont's northern open space frame which is not publicly owned is the 400 acres of farmland at the city's entrance. The Wildlife Refuge proposes to acquire about 300 acres (including land currently under an open space easement). Regardless of the Federal proposal, agriculture remains an appropriate use of the land in this area. A park for active recreational uses, such as ball fields, is also a possible use of the land in this area. There is also potential to convert some of this agricultural area to wetlands, if purchased for that purpose. Any future use, including open space, parks and recreation, and agriculture, should be compatible with the Wildlife Refuge.

TRAILS AND CONNECTORS

Setting

The concept of an integrated network of linear open spaces and trails was clearly articulated in early plans for Fremont. They are an important open space and recreational resource. Many trails and paths form segments of this system but the system is far from complete.

Existing Trails

The Alameda Creek Regional Trail, described in a previous section of this Chapter, is an important element of the city's trail system, extending from the hills to the Bay. Another important trail is the two-mile loop trail around Lake Elizabeth which connects to a trail to the BART station on the north and a trail to Gomes Park on the south.

There are trails that provide landscaped pedestrian and bicycle links between streets in residential subdivisions. One of these, Antelope Hills, encompasses 185 acres of public open space within a residential neighborhood in the lower Hill Area.

Fremont has five other linear easements with developed pathways. Some are on flood control district or PG&E rights-of-way. These trails provide shortcuts between streets for bicyclists and pedestrians.

A final, but unofficial, element of Fremont's trail system are several privately-owned linear open space areas within residential and industrial subdivisions.

In addition to trails and paths within urbanized areas, there are extensive trail systems within the Mission Peak Regional Preserve, Coyote Hills Regional Park, and the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Assessment of Existing System

Fremont's existing trail and path system could be improved by completing links between some existing trails. Connections and destinations could be identified. Such improvements would help complete the integrated system envisioned by earlier plans.

Projections

There are still many opportunities available to close gaps and expand the existing trail system. Existing utility easements and rights-of-way, such as the Hetch Hetchy underground water lines, could be used for local pedestrian paths as well as for bicycle commuter routes. Parts of these rights-of-way have been incorporated into adjacent city parks and some already are developed. Flood control channels provide another

opportunity. Concerns with maintenance, security and legal issues would need to be addressed in cooperation with other public agencies.

Several regional trails connecting Fremont to other parts of the Bay Area are also proposed for within Fremont (see Trails Map in the Transportation Chapter). These include two major trails proposed by the East Bay Regional Park District in Fremont's Hill Area: a Garin Regional Park to Mission Peak trail (which is part of the Bay Area Ridge Trail), and a Niles Canyon Trail connecting the Alameda Creek Trail with Sunol. The Bay Trail, encircling the Bay, is proposed to pass through Fremont west of I-880 between Stevenson Boulevard and the southern city limits. There will also be a connection from the Bay Trail to Mission Peak Regional Preserve. Most of the Bay Trail's proposed alignment is along future streets. As these trails are implemented, the City can assist in planning their implementation, provide improved connections with local trails and identify opportunities for parking and staging areas.

The California Recreational Trails Act requires cities to consider the feasibility of integrating its trail routes with appropriate segments of the state system. There are no state system trails in the vicinity of Fremont.

CIVIC OPEN SPACES

Civic open space is a plaza, a courtyard, a walkway, or another outdoor gathering, sitting, or eating place, usually surrounded by buildings or other structures that help give it form. It may be public or it may be semi-private as for employee use. Community celebrations, fairs, and other events become associated with these special places.

Setting

Most of Fremont's civic open spaces date from the past. Some are public and some are associated with a church or institution. Examples are Williams Park with its historic carriage house in the Central Business District, the Presbyterian Church cemetery in Centerville, the Irvington Plaza and monument in Irvington, and the Carnegie Library entrance area and Veterans' Memorial Hall in Niles. As development has grown around Mission San Jose, the entrance area and the olive grove behind the Mission and its historic cemetery have become valued civic open space. The City-owned Olive Hyde Art Gallery entry plaza is another civic open space resource near the Mission. One of the few planned civic open spaces in Fremont is the broad bricked plaza at the City Government Building.

Even parking lots and streets can temporarily serve as usable civic open spaces when they are blocked off for special community events such as the seasonal and monthly flea markets at Ohlone College and in the Niles district, the Fremont Art and Wine Festival, Charlie Chaplin days in Niles and Mission Days in Mission San Jose.

Outdoor sculptures and public art can enhance civic open spaces. Fremont sets aside one percent of the construction cost of new public buildings for public art. Several sculptures have been installed in public facilities and parks. Commercial and industrial developers have also placed sculptures in prominent locations in their projects.

Projections

Most of the Fremont's civic open spaces were not planned to serve that purpose. As the city becomes more densely developed, recognition and protection of these existing civic open spaces, as well as planning for new ones, becomes more important. Usable open space areas can be an important element of commercial districts, as well as public facilities such as BART stations, community centers and City administrative buildings.

GATEWAYS AND LANDSCAPED ROADWAYS SETTING

Setting

Gateways and other identified entrances to the city help reinforce Fremont's sense of identity. Gateways are where visitors and residents are welcomed to the city — where they sense they have arrived in Fremont.

Fremont has four natural gateways: Mission Pass, Niles Canyon, the Dumbarton Bridge at Coyote Hills and, from BART, the Alameda Creek Quarries. These gateways mark the passage from open land or water into the developed city. These natural gateways are discussed in more detail in the Natural Resources Chapter.

At most entry points from neighboring cities there are no natural changes in land form or distinctive architectural features to signal arrival in Fremont. In some locations the City has created gateways using landscaping and signs, however there is no consistent gateway design or theme.

Most people entering Fremont do so on freeways. Freeway design leaves little room for landscaped gateway treatments, although opportunities exist at interchanges as drivers enter the city street system. BART stations are also points of entry into Fremont.

Fremont's broad, landscaped boulevards further distinguish Fremont from its neighbors, as do the soundwalls, fences and landscaping which back on to many boulevards from residential subdivisions.

Projections

Without a special effort to clearly define its entry points, continuing urban development will make it increasingly difficult to distinguish Fremont from its neighbors. This is especially true at the city's southern boundary where the open space frame is incomplete. Landscaping and entrance signs would help make Fremont stand out as "place" or "destination". A coordinated gateway design system would also help reinforce Fremont's special identity.

The constraints of freeway design preclude gateway treatments in most locations. However, as interchanges are rebuilt over the next five years the City can seek opportunities to encourage CALTRANS to provide special landscaping, and the City can erect signs where drivers pass on to the city's street system. For example, the City has set aside a strip of land on the south side of Stevenson Boulevard at the I-880 Freeway off-ramp for a landscaped gateway. BART stations and landmarks near gateways can also be clearly identified as being within the City of Fremont.

In addition to formal gateways, the City should carefully review building designs at natural gateways to encourage buildings which enhance the gateway character and contribute to Fremont's visual image. Recognition, protection and enhancement (though landscape treatments) of the major natural gateways is also possible.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

Fundamental Goals

The importance of Fremont's open space to its character as a community is reflected in several of the **Fundamental Goals** presented in Chapter 2, including the following:

- F 2 AN HARMONIOUS BLEND OF THE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS
- F 3 A CITYSCAPE WITH AN OPEN FEELING
- F 7 AN OPEN SPACE FRAME THAT INCLUDES THE HILLFACE, BAY WETLANDS AND GATEWAYS

Open Space Goals

Chapters in other sections stress the importance of Fremont's open space to the city's natural resources.

In this Chapter, the following goals build on the Fundamental Goals:

- GOAL OS 1:** Open space in the hills to protect Fremont's eastern open space frame
- GOAL OS 2:** Recognition, protection, and enhancement of significant natural areas and wildlife habitats in the city, including Bay tidal, seasonal, and freshwater wetlands, and open meadows and fields
- GOAL OS 3:** Urban open spaces to enhance community identity and the quality of the urban environment
- GOAL OS 4:** Distinctive gateways and roadway landscaping for Fremont

OPEN SPACE (OS) GOAL 1: OPEN SPACE IN THE HILLS TO PROTECT
FREMONT'S EASTERN OPEN SPACE FRAME

OBJECTIVE OS 1.1: Protection of the Hill Face, ridgeline, and stream corridors

Policy OS 1.1.1: Land with environmental resources such as stream corridors shall be conserved (see Land Use Chapter for implementation measures).

Policy OS 1.1.2: Encourage preservation of open space on the Hill Face, ridgeline and Niles Canyon to protect the city's visual character.

Implementation 1: Encourage creation of large, contiguous parcels of permanently protected open space when considering transfer of development rights or other techniques for conserving open space. When open space is contiguous to an existing parcel of land owned or managed by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), or when a parcel is included in the EBRPD master plan for inclusion in a park or preserve, encourage EBRPD to work with the City in managing such land.

Implementation 2: Establish procedures and techniques for voluntary donation of funds or land for hillside protection. Such procedures and techniques could include creation of a land trust or donation programs for businesses and citizens.

Implementation 3: Monitor the uses of Hill Face lands adjacent to the city, especially in Niles Canyon, to ensure protection of the historical landscape, wildlife habitat and Alameda Creek watershed.

OBJECTIVE OS 1.2: Hill Area residential development sensitive to its environment and as unobtrusive as possible (see Land Use Chapter for policies and implementation measures related to this objective)

OBJECTIVE OS 1.3: A Regional Park on the Vargas Plateau

Policy OS 1.3.1: Acquisition and development of a Regional Park on the Vargas Plateau by the East Bay Regional Park District shall be encouraged by the City. Park facilities and access should be consistent with the City's goals for this area.

Implementation 1: Encourage the East Bay Regional Park District to acquire, plan and develop a Vargas Plateau Regional Park or Preserve.

Implementation 2: Review plans for any park on Vargas Plateau for consistency with the City's goals and objectives for the area.

OPEN SPACE (OS) GOAL 2: RECOGNITION, PROTECTION, AND
ENHANCEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT NATURAL AREAS AND
WILDLIFE HABITATS IN THE CITY, INCLUDING BAY TIDAL,
SEASONAL, AND FRESHWATER WETLANDS, AND OPEN
MEADOWS AND FIELDS

OBJECTIVE OS 2.1: A National Wildlife Refuge that incorporates and restores
Bay wetlands

Policy OS 2.1.1: The City shall actively support expansion of the San
Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Implementation 1: Support efforts to obtain Federal and State funding to
complete the Wildlife Refuge in a timely manner.

Policy OS 2.1.2: Land uses and activities in areas adjacent to the Wildlife
Refuge must be compatible with, and, if possible, should
promote the goals of the Refuge.

Implementation 1: Evaluate development projects to assess as their potential
impacts on the Wildlife Refuge.

Implementation 2: Prohibit residential subdivisions contiguous with the
Wildlife Refuge to limit the threat of domestic and feral
animals.

OBJECTIVE OS 2.2: Protection and enhancement of wetlands within the city

Policy OS 2.2.1: The City shall take an active role in protecting wetlands.
There shall be no net loss of wetlands as a result of
development in Fremont.

Implementation 1: Early assessment of environmental constraints and
resources should be conducted and submitted with
applications for development of projects in or adjacent to
wetland areas. Early consultation with the City regarding
the implications of the environmental assessment for
proposed development is recommended. See Land Use
Chapter discussion and Policy 3.11 in the Land Use
Chapter.

Implementation 2: Conditions of development approval shall include measures to protect wetlands, including long-term monitoring and maintenance programs as appropriate. Off-site mitigation should be used only if on-site mitigation is not feasible and if the loss of on-site wetlands is out-weighed by a specific public purpose. The replacement off-site mitigation site should be nearby.

Implementation 3: Require that proposed development be compatible with wetlands, both in terms of the allowed uses, and in the arrangement of the buildings, parking, landscaping, access, drainage, runoff, and other facilities on the parcel.

OBJECTIVE OS 2.3: Conservation of natural areas within the city

Policy OS 2.3.1: Publicly owned unique natural areas remaining in the flatland area of the city (see Natural Resources Chapter, Figure 9-3) shall be managed to protect and enhance wildlife habitats to the degree feasible (See Biological Resources Section of the Natural Resources Chapter for implementation measures).

Policy OS 2.3.2: The City shall require facilities such as a golf course in the Hill Area and sports facilities in the baylands to be sited, designed, and developed in a manner sensitive to the natural environment.

Implementation 1: Design intensively used recreational facilities to retain and enhance natural features and mitigate environmental impacts to the degree feasible.

OBJECTIVE OS 2.4: Integration of natural and historic features into new development

Policy OS 2.4.1: The City will give special consideration to protecting natural and historic elements in approving designs for new development. Developments should maximize preservation of natural waterways, landmark and heritage trees, wildlife habitats, and other natural and historic features and provide for their protection and enhancement during and after construction. Proposed developments should include physical and visual access to natural features and historical sites.

OBJECTIVE OS 2.5: A comprehensive system of trails connecting destinations within Fremont

Policy OS 2.5.1: Develop a system of trails shown on the General Plan trails map, as funding permits. Effort shall be concentrated on trails that link major destinations and are accessible to a large number of people.

Implementation 1: Develop priorities for filling in gaps in the existing trail system. Priorities include a link between Central Park and the Alameda Creek Regional Trail with a bridge at the proposed Alameda Creek Quarries Regional Park; a link from Central Park to Mission San Jose via Mission Creek; and a “Bay to Ridgetop” trail near the southern end of Fremont.

Implementation 2: Develop and apply standards for trails and paths appropriate to their proposed use. Standards should address width, surfaces, signs, safety, and access. In general, major trails should be designed for multiple uses: pedestrians, bicycles and horses.

Implementation 3: Seek citizen input in planning new trails and paths.

Implementation 4: Plan and build trails that connect residential, industrial and commercial areas with nearby regional trails.

Policy 2.5.2: Provide public access to major trails, with appropriate staging areas and parking where feasible. Public access points shown on the General Plan are approximate locations. Specific locations of those access points will be determined as part of project approval and shall be provided in new development. Where access is provided, (either as required or as part of project designs), site and building design adjacent to the access point or trail shall also provide for sufficient privacy and a clear boundary between public access and private uses.

Policy OS 2.5.3: The City shall use a variety of resources in completing its trail system.

Implementation 1: Work with other public agencies to develop paths on existing public rights-of-way, such as creeks, flood control channels, Hetch Hetchy and South Bay Aqueduct rights-of-way, and PG&E power line easements, where needed to close gaps.

Implementation 2: Seek to obtain State and Federal grants to help implement the City's trail system.

Implementation 3: Require new development to dedicate right-of-way for trails where they are indicated on the General Plan map. The location of trails shown in the Hill Area which do not already exist are conceptual. Exact trail locations will be determined when development projects are proposed.

Policy OS 2.5.4: The City shall strongly support the East Bay Regional Park District's plans for expanding its parks and trails in Fremont.

Implementation 1: Strengthen the City's liaison with the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD).

OBJECTIVE OS 2.6: A system of regional trails connecting Fremont with neighboring cities and connecting the hills to the Baylands

Policy OS 2.6.1: The City supports the ABAG Bay Trail, the “Bay Ridge Trail” (East Bay Regional Park District Garin to Mission Peak Trail), Niles Canyon regional trail, and Wildlife Refuge trails.

Implementation 1: Assure sufficient right-of-way and improvements for the ABAG Bay trail along its proposed alignment in Fremont.

Implementation 2: Work with Santa Clara County, the cities of San Jose and Milpitas, and other public agencies to provide a bicycle and pedestrian bridge across Coyote Creek.

Implementation 3: Encourage regional agencies to provide restrooms and parking at trailheads of major regional trails.

Implementation 4: Work with appropriate organizations and agencies including the East Bay Regional Park District, to facilitate the development of the Bay Ridge Trail and Niles Canyon regional trail. The location(s) of these trails on the City’s Trails Map is conceptual.

Implementation 5: When evaluating future development throughout the trail corridor, particularly in the Vargas Plateau area, consider opportunities to create staging facilities.

Implementation 6: A multi departmental study should be conducted to clarify administrative responsibilities for the city’s trail system.

OPEN SPACE (OS) GOAL 3: CIVIC OPEN SPACE TO ENHANCE
COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND THE QUALITY OF THE URBAN
ENVIRONMENT

OBJECTIVE OS 3.1: Preservation of historic civic open spaces, and development of new pedestrian walkways, public plazas and other open spaces in community commercial centers, the Central Business District and at public facilities

Policy OS 3.1.1: Pleasant outdoor spaces should be provided where people can gather for informal activities and special events. These civic open spaces should be in a variety of sizes, easily accessible, protected from excess sun, wind, and noise, and open to views from outside.

Implementation 1: Inventory, and protect through zoning and other mechanisms, historic civic open spaces used or enjoyed by the public.

Implementation 2: As a part of future Specific Plans or other design and development plans for community commercial districts, include plazas, open spaces and other pedestrian areas appropriate to the size, scale, and type of development.

Implementation 3: Continue to provide public art in or as part of new City buildings and facilities. Consider establishing incentives to encourage the provision of art in publicly accessible portions of private buildings.

OPEN SPACE (OS) GOAL 4: DISTINCTIVE GATEWAYS AND ROADWAY LANDSCAPING FOR FREMONT

OBJECTIVE OS 4.1: Clear identification of Fremont's boundaries with special gateways at all major entrances to the city (this section focuses on man-made gateways; natural gateways are addressed in the Visual Resources section of the Natural Resources Chapter)

Policy OS 4.1.1: The city's major entrances, including freeway offramps and BART stations, should be clearly marked with signs and landscaping where space permits.

Implementation 1: Develop a gateway at the south entrance to Fremont on I-880 to complete Fremont's open space frame. Encourage developments at the southern entrance to the city at I-880 to incorporate major landscape and design elements to serve this purpose.

Implementation 2: Develop a city entrance sign that can be used at all major city gateways at a size and scale appropriate to the location. Signs should be readable at highway distances and speeds.

Implementation 3: Maintain the existing landscaped entry corridor on Alvarado Boulevard, and create new formal entries, with setbacks and landscaping, at the locations shown on the General Plan map.

Policy OS 4.1.2: Maintain city street standards that call for broad rights-of-way and abundant landscaping.

Implementation 1: Continue to apply the City's standards for right of way improvements to new development.

Implementation 2: Continue to ensure that the landscaped strips between the curbs of streets and private property lines are maintained.